

17 APR 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Director-Comptroller
THROUGH : Deputy Director for Support
SUBJECT : Training and Career Development

1. Introduction

This paper explores the relationship — past, present, and projected — between training provided to Agency employees and its contribution both to organizational effectiveness and the overall development of professional officers.

By no means definitive and concentrating at this time almost exclusively on those areas in which the Office of Training has been involved directly, this review underscores the need for greater correlation between training functions and actual operating responsibilities at all levels of the organization. But it also indicates that there has, in fact, been a movement toward increasingly precise use of training by operating components to meet immediate job demands as well as to foster longer-term employee development.

2. Agency Training - A Changing Focus

Conceived as a service-or support-oriented function within the Agency, training for the most part has responded to needs expressed by operating components.

Through perhaps its first decade and a half, the Agency was expanding, its employee force was relatively young. Supervisory and managerial personnel, as well as many officers performing specialized functions, relied on pre-Agency experience and training in carrying out their

responsibilities. Consequently, principal training attention was given to newly arriving employees, introducing them to the world of intelligence and preparing them for their initial assignments as operations officers, analysts, support officers, etc.

Such training as was given to experienced officers was geared to particular job demands and, for the most part, did not pretend to prepare them for broader range responsibilities or even to provide an expanded perspective within which they performed their specified tasks. Although a management training capability was developed in the mid-1950s, as described in our paper on this subject prepared for you earlier, enrollment in such training was neither extensive nor on a systematic basis.

A marked break in this pattern occurred in 1963. Recognizing that junior officers of the 1950s were by then midcareerists and the likely source of a later generation of senior officers, the Office of Training introduced the Midcareer Executive Development Program.

This program was twofold. It consisted, first, of a six-week course designed to "open up" carefully chosen officers in all Directorates to the totality of Agency missions and functions; to develop their understanding of the role of intelligence in national security and foreign relations; and to provide them with an appreciation for the policy-making mechanisms of the government.

The second, longer range phase of the program required that a five-year career development plan be established for each participating officer, devised jointly by him and his career service. Such plans failed to be implemented in too many instances, however, and this phase subsequently was eliminated. Experience with this facet of the midcareer program would appear to have important implications for efforts to relate training to career development through use of sanctions and will be treated later in this paper.

Despite abandonment of the "executive development" aspect of midcareer training, the Midcareer Course nevertheless remains an effective vehicle for achieving its initially stated goals. More than 1,000 officers throughout the Agency have taken this course since its

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inception in 1963; moreover, it was the first of several courses developed in response to changing needs, conditions, and personnel patterns within the Agency.

Courses which have since been introduced include the Managerial Grid (1964), taken by more than 2,000 Agency officers; Chiefs of Station Seminar (1964); Advanced Management (Planning) (1967), designed to familiarize officers with the planning, programming and budgeting process; Advanced Intelligence Seminar (1969); and Advanced Operations Course (1970). The Senior Seminar, introduced in the fall of 1971, constitutes a still further milestone by recognizing that midcareerists of the 1960s are emerging as supergrade officers for this decade.

3. Establishing Training Patterns

There are now more than 60 different courses, not including foreign language training courses, conducted or administered by the Office of Training for the benefit of professional employees of the Agency. In contrast to the former emphasis on training incoming junior officers, these courses are designed to meet the needs of a wide spectrum of professional personnel, depending on component affiliation and functional duties, experience and grade level, and need for broadened outlook.

Given the number of courses and the multiplicity of purposes they serve, there is genuine need by managers and supervisors — as well as individual officers — for guidance about training appropriate to their purposes.

The Office of Training, consequently, has developed a "Profile of Courses" (see attachment) to provide such guidance. Essentially, it consists of a central core or ladder of six courses which, in our opinion, should be an integral part of the successful officer's total career development. These courses, four of a general nature and two in the managerial field, are intended to broaden the individual officer's scope while complementing and enhancing his training and experience in specialized areas. Cognizant of your own thinking, we are presently examining ways of incorporating management or leadership training, ADP orientation, and information sciences and technology into the core courses as well as into selected other courses.

It should be emphasized here that each career service, or certainly each Directorate, ought to have a training profile for its own officers which would mesh with OTR offerings so that the end result would be an integrated training outline serving the needs of an immediate office as well as broader Agency needs in terms of employee development.

As a step toward this end, OTR has now categorized its curriculum in the forthcoming catalog so that officials in the respective components and career services will be able to select appropriate courses or training packages more quickly as well as more systematically than has been possible heretofore.

Next, we hope to designate, in consultation with appropriate officials throughout the Agency, training packages or patterns which would be regarded as standard, though not inflexibly so, for "line" officers in selected career services. Included in such packages would be the entire range of training opportunities available from OTR, other components, and externally.

4. Criteria for Admission to Core Courses

Concurrent with the development of the Profile and categorization of courses, we also are issuing revised descriptions of all OTR courses in the forthcoming training catalog. The most salient new feature of these course descriptions is an enumeration of criteria by which officers should be selected for enrollment.

In the case of core courses, the criteria relate primarily to age and grade considerations, to coincide generally with an officer's progress and advancement in the Agency. Such criteria also indicate that selection for these courses, after the initial five years of employment, should be weighed carefully, taking into account an officer's performance record and potential for further professional growth.

Except for the Advanced Intelligence Seminar, whose nominees are screened to assure an across-the-board "mix" among Agency components, the Office of Training has not presumed to control the selection of students for its courses. Nor, except in an occasional case of clearly inappropriate enrollment, have we denied a training opportunity to an officer whose component insisted on it.

There have been, and are, instances in which we have stipulated certain training or experience as prerequisite to a given course. Our experience with this practice has not been satisfactory, however. Operating components, especially the Clandestine Service for whom a large part of OTR training is conducted, frequently experience problems in providing sufficient lead time for training an officer for a projected assignment. Consequently, requests to waive prerequisites are common and, rather than stand by while an officer proceeds to an assignment without any appropriate training whatever, OTR has been liberal in waiving the few prerequisites which have been established.

Training initiatives and criteria are uneven throughout the Agency, varying from Directorate to Directorate and from branch to branch. In some cases, the individual officer acts as his own personnel and training officer by seeking enrollment; in others, a conscious management decision is made by supervisors; and in still others, an officer is sent to training until a more definitive use of his time and services is determined. We are neither empowered, nor sufficiently cognizant of circumstances in every case, to pass judgment on the suitability of a component's training selection practices. The combination of decentralized personnel management and training's status as a support activity are, of course, major factors in lack of planning for training and uniform observance of selection criteria. This diversity is not without its strong points, however, given the varied occupational endeavors in any one career service and the opportunity for individual officers to demonstrate both initiative and motivation toward training as in other matters.

5. Training Sanctions

In general, we believe that imposition of training sanctions, insofar as officer promotion is concerned, is an unwise and impracticable course of action. A number of serious complications and inequities would obtain, for example, if there were an Agency-wide stipulation that officers lacking the Midcareer Course could not be promoted to GS-14.

First, as presently constituted, the Midcareer Course could not handle the large numbers of students such a requirement would inevitably generate. Currently, there are approximately 1900 Agency

officers in the GS-13 category and a comparable number at the GS-12 level. These officers constitute the principal population from which Midcareer Course students are drawn. Against this population, the course was able to accommodate 138 officers in FY 1971. During the same period, more than twice this many officers, approximately 295, were promoted to GS-14. If promotions projected for the future even approximate this experience, imposition of this sanction would necessitate drastic alteration in the entire character of the Midcareer Course - content, size and duration - and quite probably require the allocation of additional instructional and financial resources as well.

Second, if the Midcareer Course is used exclusively as a vehicle for executive development, functional or substantive specialists not slated for supervisory or managerial responsibilities almost certainly would be precluded from enrolling. For many officers in this category, the course has been an opportunity for becoming updated and professionally renewed. Though an intangible benefit, we believe the Agency has gained much by enrolling this type of officer in the Midcareer Course and, in our opinion, the practice should be continued.

Third, there are significant numbers of Agency officers whose availability for training, in the Midcareer Course or otherwise, is circumscribed by frequent or indefinite assignment away from Headquarters. While improved managerial planning and practice could diminish this inequity, the fact remains that officers whose assignments involve relatively longer periods at Headquarters generally enjoy greater opportunity for formal training.

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Although no sanction is involved, the existing requirement (HR [REDACTED] that new professional employees take what is now called the Intelligence and World Affairs Course has met with poor compliance. In FY 1971, only about half the new professional employees satisfied the requirement; in earlier years, the rate was poorer still, due less to the individual than to his component which deemed the course unnecessary or the employee's services indispensable. In circumstances such as these, and they apply to other courses as well, the question arises as to whether the individual ought properly to bear the penalty of sanctions.

Moreover, the existence of sanctions, we think, would create a high degree of expectation among officers who successfully complete

training required for promotion. Many officers who had been selected for participation in the Midcareer Executive Development Program were severely disappointed when the five-year plans established for their professional development were not implemented. Many returned to the same positions from which they had been selected or otherwise failed to achieve any recognizable career "development". As mentioned earlier, this critical phase of the midcareer program had to be abandoned.

The Agency's experience with foreign language sanctions is probably the most well-known case of a good idea gone awry. Waivers to foreign language position requirements overseas have been used with such variance as to make them meaningless. Officers failing to meet, say, a foreign language competence level of 3 as demanded by a given position have been assigned to the job, nevertheless, on the grounds that having some competence they would eventually achieve the level designated.

Sanctions are effective in selected circumstances, however, as in the enrollment of CS officers in the Chiefs of Station Seminar prior to their assuming such position overseas and in the cases of Agency officers headed for high risk areas abroad taking the [REDACTED] Course beforehand. 25X1A

The acid test of sanctions almost certainly is the demonstrated value of training, in a very pragmatic way, to a particular function or undertaking. Consequently, we are increasingly concerned about feedback mechanisms through which the applicability and validity of training may be ascertained. We have begun a modest effort in developing and using such mechanisms, but the program is still very much in the embryonic stage. We intend to pursue this matter further. Once validity is clearly established for a particular course or training program, the question of training sanctions in relation to particular assignments can be entertained more seriously than we think is now possible.

Although the validity of many of our key courses has yet to be established definitively, there is no question that several of them have fostered considerable competition for enrollment. The Basic Operations Course has been, and continues to be, regarded within the Clandestine Service as absolutely essential training for the junior operations officer. Enrollment regularly is oversubscribed.

The selection process throughout the Agency for the Midcareer Course is still such that with minor exceptions components choose the most highly qualified officers available. Competition for enrollment in the Advanced Intelligence Seminar is similarly intense, forcing components to make qualitative judgments about the suitability of their candidates. We anticipate that as they become better known, the Advanced Operations Course and the Senior Seminar will join those courses whose reputations prompt a heavy flow of candidacies and thus provoke a kind of winnowing process without the formal discipline imposed by sanctions.

6. Alternate Approaches

Once the Agency agrees on a profile of courses and we are able to compose training prototypes for representative officers within the various Directorates, we believe there will not be serious need for training sanctions. Agency management would have typical profiles against which to judge whether at a given level an officer had been properly trained. Moreover, we believe that distinct allowance must be made for an officer's development through experience in ways which formal training cannot hope to provide.

It may be possible, and we are pursuing this proposition, to prove by an audit of personnel and training records that officers who are well-trained move ahead more quickly than ones who are not. While such advancement might be due equally to other factors, such as an officer's own abilities and ambitions, realization among his colleagues that he is well-trained will nevertheless arouse more constructive interest in training than is likely to be achieved by sanctions. A case in point is the decision by the Agency, in 1956, to end the Junior Officer Training Program's exclusive reliance on external applicants as a source of manpower. This decision resulted not only from the Program's reputation of recruiting highly qualified people, but also from the belief widely held in the Agency that training provided JOTs (and later Career Trainees) enhanced their career prospects.

7. Component Training Officers

A key improvement, in our estimation, would be the integration of training with personnel management within the several career services and operating components. Basically, aside from the obvious need to

make senior managers more training conscious, this should consist of an upgrading of the role and qualifications of component training officers and their inclusion as members of career service boards. This is already much the case in the DDI.

There are few full-time training officers in Agency components, but where they exist, as in the Office of Communications, Technical Services Division, Office of Logistics, and National Photographic Interpretation Center, among others, they perform an invaluable service and carry considerable weight in terms of personnel management.

At present, there are approximately 50 component training officers plus five Senior Training Officers. These individuals range in grade from GS-08 to GS-16, hold varying types of jobs, with wide arcs of responsibility, with extremely different "charters" from the office director or division chief as the case may be.

Not only are most of them part-time training officers, but they tend to be administrative or support personnel with neither substantive experience in the components in which they are serving nor with firsthand knowledge of training functions and curriculum. The Office of Training briefs newly-appointed training officers and conducts annual orientation programs for all of them, but such procedures really are not sufficient to overcome the built-in inadequacies of the system cited above. Consequently, we believe a very basic change of managerial philosophy and practice is essential in this area if training is to become a significant tool of personnel management and development.

A less sweeping, but nevertheless important step would be increased emphasis on the training section of the Field Reassignment Questionnaire. Additional stimulus is needed for supervisors and affected officers to give considered thought to training requirements and opportunities when planning reassignments. This would necessitate the availability of some version of the training catalog overseas, presumably in an abbreviated and sterilized edition. The need for this was emphasized time and again to the DTR in his recent visit to 11 stations in the Far East.


8. Conclusion

In view of the circumstances described in this paper, we believe there are a number of steps which already have been taken to promote a cogent integration of training with career development. Primarily, these consist of a system of core or ladder courses intended to complement and enhance training which a professional officer receives in specialized fields. It includes also a more precise statement of selection criteria and a categorization of OTR courses which ought to make easier the selection of appropriate training for a given officer.

Other steps which are contemplated or recommended are the development of prototype training packages for "line" officers in the various Directorates; an audit of personnel and training records to determine if well-trained officers do in fact advance more quickly in the Agency; efforts to establish validity of training programs by use of improved feedback mechanisms; strengthening the role of the component training officer; and giving increased attention to training considerations as part of career service board deliberations and completion of the Field Reassignment Questionnaire.

We believe that with constructive progress in these areas there would be little need for training sanctions.

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Att: Profile of Courses

*has now been published
in new OTR catalog.*